THEOLOGY

VOL. XLVIII APRIL, 1945 No. 298

Editorial Note

THE Report entitled *Confirmation Today*, to which we called attention in January, has already begun to evoke the discussion that its authors desired. The Bishop of Oxford, for example, in his *Diocesan Magazine* (November and December, 1944, and January, 1945) has severely criticized one of the proposals which the Report submitted for consideration—viz., that the baptized might be admitted to communion for a period before they are confirmed. The Bishop maintains that this proposal plays havoc with the traditional theology of the relation between baptism and confirmation. We hope that the Bishop's articles will be given a wider publicity than they have so far received, and that other theologians will answer his arguments, if they can be answered. If he is right in holding that confirmation, and not baptism, admits to membership in the Church, then it appears to us that the case for regarding the separation of confirmation from baptism in the West as a mistaken development is so much the stronger. But if it has been a mistake, it will be a work of generations to correct it. At the same time, an ordinance, corresponding to what confirmation has become in the West, and especially in the Anglican tradition, will still be needed in the Church—*i.e.*, an ordinance that will mark a church member's "coming of age."

Mr Bennett's article in this number is a contribution to another aspect of the problem. As he says, discussions and agitations concerning what is called "indiscriminate baptism" have been proceeding for a long time, but they have proved singularly inconclusive. Yet to acquiesce in a policy of drift or indecision cannot be right. It seems to us that he makes out a strong case for the view that confirmation rather than baptism is the point to which disciplinarians should first direct their attention.

Indiscriminate Confirmation

THERE has been much discussion of late about the terms on which infant baptism should be administered. The question is clearly of paramount importance, and it is not in the least the purpose of this article to suggest that it should be shelved. But in the first place it does not appear that the discussion is at present leading to anything very valuable in practice. Exhortations to sponsors, for instance, and insistence that they shall be of communicant status have little result since the ability of the sponsor to influence the godchild is in any case limited by the sympathy and support of the parents. Indeed there is much to be said for the abolition of the whole business of godparents, their duties being frankly allowed to devolve upon the parents, from

whom in point of fact the child will receive his or her upbringing. It cannot be good that week by week numerous persons should be encouraged by the Church to compromise their integrity by undertaking that which, however firm or feeble their intentions, they are in no position to fulfil.

But, secondly, it may be doubted whether in the absence of theological clarification any sound policy as to practice in the administration of baptism can be reached. Chiefly there is need to arrive at some clearer understanding of what is and what is not necessary for the effective operation of the grace given in this sacrament. The parish priest who "makes a stand" in the matter of "indiscriminate baptism," as some have already attempted to do, is liable to find his whole position undermined by a more or less ex opere operato theory which, rightly or wrongly, is widely held.

Thirdly, any wide-scale limitation of baptism would inevitably raise far-reaching questions about the relations between Church and State. It may well be that those questions should be raised, and indeed they can hardly be much longer evaded, but there is little likelihood that the Church in its present mood will be willing deliberately to involve itself in them. On all these grounds—the fruitlessness of discussions and attempts already undertaken, the uncertainty of the theological position, and the impracticability of any general move in the matter—it would seem that baptism is not the place for an immediate disciplinary stand. Indeed we are not yet in a theological position to say to what extent and on what basis a stand should ever be made at this particular point. But there is no more pressing question, and it should be faced with intentions such as may lead to something more serious than mere speculation.

But in the meantime can nothing be done? Is there no point at which a standard can be set? Surely it is precisely such a point that is provided by present Anglican practice with regard to confirmation. Indeed, if I understand him aright, so excellent a theologian as the Bishop of Oxford[1] contends that not baptism but confirmation admits to the Church. On that showing confirmation would certainly seem to be the right place for setting a standard of membership. But on any showing, so long as the present conjunction of the renewal of the baptismal vows and confirmation is retained, it is at confirmation that responsible membership is taken up at the same time that ordination to the ministry of the laity, on which so much stress is laid by the recent report on *Confirmation Today*, is received through the laying on of hands. Here, if anywhere, there should be vocation and vocation should be tested. This may indeed be an outstanding advantage of the separation of confirmation from baptism. Here is the very safeguard against the worst dangers attendant upon infant baptism.

But *Confirmation Today* walks all round the central problem. We are told that of every twenty-six persons confirmed seventeen lapse and nine continue as Easter communicants. In passing it may be noted that the reception of communion at Easter is not always an evidence of

[1] *Oxford Diocesan Magazine*, December, 1944, p. 111.

abounding zeal for the religion of the Church. But why is there this disparity between the number of confirmation candidates presented and of even Easter communicants? Surely the figures may produce at least a suspicion that a great many people are being presented for confirmation who ought not to be presented. The root of the mischief is not, in fact, to be reached by delaying confirmation or separating the renewal of the vows from confirmation. The putting into practice of either of these proposals might conduce to a higher standard, but their efficacy for that purpose is extremely doubtful, and in order to produce a higher standard it is not necessary to upset a long and well-understood tradition and resort to these devices. The qualifications to be demanded before confirmation at whatever age are the crux of the matter. One suspects—clearly it is a matter about which it is impossible to provide statistics—that over large areas confirmation is only less indiscriminate than baptism because it is less a matter of custom with the English public.

The fault lies partly in an attitude towards confirmation and partly in a fear. On the one hand, the point of view persists which finds expression in the remark, "I think that we might get So-and-so for confirmation." On the other hand, there is the fear lest the parish will make a poor showing by not delivering a sufficient quota of candidates at the chancel step. Confirmation is, in fact, regarded (somewhat fondly) as a means of "getting" people rather than as a setting of the seal upon the "got," and at the same time it is supposed, not entirely without reason, that he will be regarded as the greatest success who appears to have got the most, however little he may have got them in reality. It should be made clear by authority that the former notion is unsound and the latter without basis. Authority should also give to the parish priest the encouragement and protection which he needs in dealing boldly with the matter. Doubtless there is from parish to parish an immense variety of practice—there will be those who will hardly recognize the situation which this article describes—but a large majority of clergy find themselves in parishes with a long tradition of laxity which the decay of faith has rendered increasingly dangerous and intolerable. Hence the well-filled confirmation register side by side with the poorly-filled communion rail, and the tragedy is that not a few who might have become faithful communicants drift away with the general exodus. It is hard enough in all conscience for a lad or a girl to become a faithful communicant. It is made far harder when they find that to persevere is exceptional.

The first step towards stopping the leakage after confirmation will be a closer regulation of the inflow. It is hardly to be expected that the young will take the matter with due seriousness unless we are serious in our demands, and the elementary demands should be made before, not during, preparation for confirmation. Those who do not come to church before they become confirmation candidates will not come to church after they are confirmed, or rarely so. Here, rather than in the warm feelings which they may be supposed to experience at the time of their confirmation, is to be found a simple and reasonable test of their earnestness. A comparison between confirmation statistics and the

number of young persons attending the average parish church on an average Sunday seems to suggest that, to make regular attendance at worship everywhere a normal qualification for confirmation would very greatly reduce the number of confirmation candidates. Such a reduction may well be the first necessary step in any reformation of confirmation, and the test proposed has the advantage of being easily understood. For it is surely reasonable to require that, before persons are accorded the honourable and responsible position to which confirmation admits them in the Christian community, they shall give evidence of more than a passing intention to share in the life of that community. And indeed there will be those to whom a more exacting standard will render confirmation the more attractive. Are we not continually being told that youth desires to be challenged and is impatient of pretence, and can we be surprised if there are those, some of the best among them, to whom at present confirmation seems but little worth while? These will be more convinced by demands than by exhortations, and the parish priest will be in a position to give his confirmation classes an invigorating quality of challenge. The vicar's study will become a Christian battle school where volunteers who have already proved their loyalty are prepared for the front line. The very proper insistence in *Confirmation Today* on the calling to service which confirmation involves will thus be implemented, and the endowment of strength for that service given in confirmation be received in a more than merely pious frame of mind. It is of little use, as things are, to urge better preparation and "following-up." What can be done must very considerably depend upon the potentialities of the candidates, and it is to this, a question hardly touched upon in *Confirmation Today*, that attention must first be paid.

What is here proposed is something perfectly definite—that confirmation should as a normal rule be administered only to those who are already coming regularly to church. This should be made a matter of episcopal ruling, and the parish priest might well, for his own assistance in administering the rule, be required by the Bishop to sign a certificate that his candidates had over a given (and not too brief) period been fulfilling that requirement before they were accepted as candidates and their preparation begun. If there were exceptional cases, these would be reported with the special circumstances which led the parish priest to feel warranted in presenting them.[1]

Now this would not, of course, put an end to the problem of lapsed communicants. That will always be with us. But it might reasonably be expected to reduce it to less grotesque proportions. In the diffuse mass of "C. of E." the confirmed would become that definite and known body of faithful which the Church of England so sorely needs and lacks. To be a confirmed member of the Church would mean something. There would be a standard. From this other steps should

[1] In the case of young people at boarding schools, where there is compulsory chapel, the test might be attendance at church during the holidays. Too often the parish priest receives the surprising information that the scion of some family, no member of which has ever shown anything but indifference towards the Church, is about to be or has been confirmed at school.

follow. Existing electoral rolls, for instance, (most of which are fatuous), should be presented wholesale to the salvage and new rolls made on a strictly communicant basis. Here, quite apart from elections, we should have our list of "effectives," a valuable possession. Or again, in order to make clear that we set some store by faithfulness, some small privileges (if nothing more) should be reserved to communicants—*e.g.*, the procession to the altar at weddings. This would at least make clear that we had a standard to which one must conform before one could be treated as being within the inner circle of the Church. The first step is to reduce confirmation to proportions of genuineness, the second to integrate the confirmed, and the third to make clear that these are "of us" in a sense that cannot be true of mere unpractising adherence. Our need is for a basis on which a real and recognizable body of the faithful can be built. Confirmation, as at present administered in the Church of England but with an altogether stricter and more selective standard, would seem to provide certainly the most practicable basis in present circumstances and possibly the right one in any circumstances.

FRANK BENNETT.

NESTON-IN-WIRRAL.

The Empty Tomb: An Easter Sermon

THERE are four accounts of what happened on Easter morning at the tomb, contained in the four Gospels. The details are different and it is often said that this proves the growth of legend; that we must reckon only with St Mark, the earliest Gospel, and disregard the others. Very well, then, just for once we will do as they say and confine ourselves to the shortest and simplest account and see what we can make of it. For, note, it is very short. It seems that the last page of the manuscript was lost, so that the genuine Gospel of St Mark ends with verse 8, with the words "they were afraid." The rest of the chapter is not found in the oldest manuscripts and we must conclude that it was added later.

So dismiss all idea of the soldiers watching the tomb, the earthquake, the angels, the evidence of the grave-clothes, the appearance of the risen Christ to Mary Magdalene, all the details we know and love so well, and confine yourselves to the bare bones of St Mark's story.

On Friday afternoon Joseph of Arimathæa went to Pilate and asked that he might have the body of Jesus. He was a councillor, "a member of the Government" we should say, and so had the *entrée* to the great man; he was "looking for the kingdom of God"—exactly what that means we can't say, but he must at least have been a sympathizer with Jesus. "What!" said Pilate, "surely he isn't dead." So he summoned the centurion who had been in charge of the crucifixion and asked whether Jesus was really dead. "Yes, sir, I can vouch for that," said the centurion. So Pilate granted Joseph's request. Joseph then bought a linen cloth, took the body down from the cross, wrapped the body in the cloth, laid the body in a tomb hewn out of the rock, and then rolled a stone over the mouth of the tomb. No one man could have done this; we must imagine the work being done by Joseph's servants. Two women, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, were watching all this.

Nothing happened on Saturday until sunset, when the Sabbath was over, and the two women, with a third (Salome), bought spices. Very early next morning they got up and made their way to the tomb; the sun was up by the time they reached it. Wondering how they should roll away the heavy stone, though there were three of them (this proves that Joseph's servants must have been two or three in number), they found to their surprise that it was already rolled back. A young man sitting on a ledge inside the tomb told them that Jesus was risen; they were to go and tell Peter and the others that they would meet Him in Galilee. The women fled in terror and told no one—just then, of course; a little later they must have told the story, or how could it have become known?

That is all—how can we explain the empty tomb?

I am going to put the answer in the form of fiction, borrowing the technique of a modern detective story.

It is the day after Pentecost and the Sanhedrin is meeting. (Let us call them the Cabinet. For all ordinary purposes they were the Government. Pilate and his legionaries had gone back to Cæsarea and administrative problems were in their hands.) The Home Secretary presents his report.

"I have rather a tiresome matter to report. The affair of Jesus of Nazareth is not finished. His followers have been preaching that he is still alive and yesterday they registered 3,000 adherents. We can't arrest such a crowd. We are back again where we were two months ago, in danger of being embroiled with the Roman power. The one thing which would stop the movement at once would be if we could produce the body of Jesus or say what happened to it. That is just what we cannot do. The problem is beyond the resources of my police. I wish that we could call in some better qualified officers."

(Now I am going to use the device of the time machine, familiar to us from novels, but without trying to make it plausible. You must just suppose the impossible. The visiting detective is able to speak the language and understand the conditions of the age into which he has come.)

A knock is heard at the door. A detective from Scotland Yard enters.

Detective. "We had an SOS by radio, calling us to take over a case. I don't know how I've got here, but here I am and at your service."

Home Secretary (after summarizing the case). "You will see how awkward it is for the Government. We want you to tell us what happened to the body. If we can find it or be sure what happened to it, we can end this agitation."

Detective. "Well, sir, it should not be very hard to solve the mystery. In our world we always find that the disposal of a body is the hardest thing possible. But our criminals have resources which I understand are not available here—powerful chemicals, great furnaces, sometimes swift and deep rivers. It must be still harder with you. I presume I have power to examine witnesses."

Home Secretary. "Certainly, as much as you like."

A week or so passed and the detective met the Cabinet and presented an interim report.

"I want to tell you how far I have got. I have examined a number of theories and decided that they will *not* do. (*a*) *Jesus was not dead.* The evidence to prove death is unanswerable. The centurion at the cross is a solid sort of man, well used to such scenes, and he is quite certain. So are Joseph of Arimathæa and his servants, who handled the body. Then there are the women, for what their evidence is worth. Besides, if by any chance Jesus did revive in the cool of the tomb, he could not possibly have moved the stone from the inside. (*b*) *The women went to the wrong tomb.* I cannot take this seriously. The women reached the tomb in broad daylight and had carefully noted it on the Friday afternoon. Had there been a mistake, Joseph could have cleared it up in a moment. (*c*) *The disciples of Jesus are lying*—they may have stolen the body and hidden it somewhere. That I cannot believe. I have interviewed them and found them simple, genuine men. It is not as if they have been a completely homogeneous body. One of their number, Judas, dropped out and went over to you. Had there been any trickery, I feel sure there would be other defections. Their leader, Peter, in particular, is not a strong man. I have seen the high-priest's maid-servant, who tells me she challenged Peter suddenly and he crumpled up. I am sure I should have caught him out in my cross-examination; but he is simple, sincere, straightforward. I cannot believe he has anything to hide. (*d*) *Joseph is lying.* But he is one of yourselves—why should he deceive you? If, as may be the case, he is a secret follower of Jesus, then what I have said about the disciples applies to him. Also I have examined his servants. It is most unlikely that he and they moved the body, impossible I should say. That is as far as I have gone. The problem is harder than I thought. I must ask for another week."

A week passed and the detective presented his final report.

"Since I last saw you, I have seen more people and thought deeply. There are curious stories about visions in which the dead man appeared. I cannot take them seriously, for the law has no dealings with the other world. The facts are simple enough: the body was there on Friday night, on Sunday morning it had gone. We can rule out the Saturday; it is your holy day and no one was about. It was moved by someone in the darkness hours of Saturday-Sunday.

"But by whom? By a process of elimination we get these results. It was either a Jew or a Gentile. No Gentile is conceivable except the soldiers who watched Jesus die. But no possible motive can be imagined. (In my world, when reconstructing crime, we lay great stress on motive.) If we are confined to Jews, the difficulty of motive is very great. Who would defile himself by touching a dead body, especially at the time of the Passover feast? Only two motives could have overcome this reluctance—intense hate or intense love. Take the first motive, the hate of the enemies of Jesus. How *could* it have operated? They had won a complete victory and put him to death. Had they taken the body, would they have held their tongues and let him be worshipped as a god? We are reduced to friends, who wanted to

move the body because they had loved Jesus so much. Why on earth should they have done it? Why want to move the body from an honourable tomb to no one knows where? We have already rejected the theory of fraud, so we are reduced to a *bona fide* attempt to provide an alternative burial. But everyone concerned was utterly surprised to find the tomb empty. And, in any case, where could they have hidden the body in a city crowded to suffocation by visitors come to the feast?

"To sum up: The body was moved on Saturday night or Sunday morning, by persons unknown, neither friends nor enemies, actuated by motives at which I cannot even hazard a guess." And with these words the detective vanished and returned to his far-off land and age.

There we must leave the matter. Perhaps it was a friend after all. You remember the ending of one of Browning's poems?

> Hush, I pray you,
> What if that friend should happen to be God?

Note.—For brevity's sake I have omitted the young man at the tomb. The detective would probably not have taken seriously the evidence of three excited women, especially if, like St Matthew and St Luke, they supposed he was an angel. Angels can't be dealt with by police methods. If he was a human being, the impenetrable mystery of the Resurrection deepens.

W. K. Lowther Clarke.

"The 1949 Prayer Book"

I

I do not think that Mr Staniforth's article, "Beauty for Ashes, or the 1949 Prayer Book," which appeared in Theology last August, should remain unchallenged.

Mr Staniforth accuses Cranmer of throwing open "to all and sundry the technicalities of the world's most highly professionalized system of worship." There was good precedent for Cranmer's action; for the early Church intended the daily offices to be the common prayer of clergy and people alike. The second book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* (chap. 59) directs the Bishop to exhort his flock to attend church daily for morning and evening prayers, while the *Canons of Hippolytus* order the presbyters to assemble daily in church, "together with the whole people, and betake themselves to devotion, to psalmody, the reading of Scripture and prayers." Moreover, the *Pereginatio Etheriæ* testifies to the presence of lay people at the daily offices in Jerusalem at the close of the fourth century,[1] and the *Vision of Piers the Plowman* to the attendance of medieval English people at Mattins, Mass and "Evensong" on Sundays and Holy Days. "With the advance of the Middle Ages," writes E. C. Ratcliff, "the interest of the laity had been concentrating upon the votive Offices of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Dead. . . . It was almost as much owing to this comparatively new

[1] Duchesne: *Christian Worship*, pp. 492 *sq.*

devotional interest, as to ignorance of Latin, that the Offices ceased to be in practice, if not in theory, the common prayer of the Christian people."[1]

Mr Staniforth sees in the unreformed Breviary a "structure of elaborate beauty and immense intricacy." He seems to forget that there was general dissatisfaction with the Divine Office in the early sixteenth century. It was felt that the multiplication of Feasts, together with the "number and hardness of the rules called the Pie," while they impeded the weekly recitation of the Psalter and the continuous reading of Scripture, distorted and tended to destroy the ancient plan of the Offices. So great was the liturgical chaos that Clement VII had entrusted to Quignon the task of restoring the Offices to their ancient form and of "removing difficulties and prolixities, with the object of recalling the clergy to the neglected duty of saying the Office."[2] Quignon's address to the Pope is reflected in Cranmer's preface, "Concerning the Services of the Church," but, while Quignon's Breviary was intended only for the clergy, Cranmer's Offices, following more ancient precedent, were intended to be "the common prayer of the Christian people."

Cranmer believed, writes Mr Staniforth, "that the masses would welcome the opportunity of expressing their religion in liturgical patterns. Today, after 400 years, the masses for the first time are free to give their answer. It takes the form of an immediate and widespread revulsion from his compilations." History, however, gives another picture. "Blessed be Christ," wrote Roger de Ascham early in Elizabeth's reign, "in our city of London commonly the commandments of God be more diligently taught, and the service of God more reverently used, and that daily in many men's private houses, than they be in Italy once a week in their common chapels."[3] Gilpin thus describes the Earl of Pembroke's home at Wilton House: "At eight in the morning, and at six in the evening, the Chapel bell rang, as was customary in noblemen's houses at that time, and it was rather remarked, if any of the company in the house . . . made a practice of omitting to appear at prayers."[4] During the Commonwealth, the Church people of Dublin were "much grieved in heart for the want of the daily services of God in the two Cathedrals and parish Churches of this city."[5] Any convention of attending the daily Offices was broken down during this period. The Puritans, moreover, "by long extempore prayers stuffed with cant . . . brought family devotion into disrepute with many, who instead of reforming the abuse, omitted it altogether." At the Restoration the people were free to give their answer. It took the form of an immediate and widespread attendance at the daily Offices. From the Restoration to the Industrial Revolution Morning and Evening Prayer were well attended in London and in

[1] *Liturgy and Worship*, pp. 265-6.
[2] Proctor and Frere: *New History of the Prayer Book*, p. 27.
[3] Quoted from G. M. Trevelyan: *English Social History*, p. 181.
[4] Gilpin: *Dialogues on Various Subjects*.
[5] Petition of Bishop of Killaloe and Dublin Clergy to the Parliamentary Commissioners.

cathedral cities.[1] Nor was the attendance restricted to noblemen and people of fashion. "Many *aged poor* people," testifies Bishop Berkeley's son, "unable to read in their own small-print Bibles, by attending regularly week-day and saints-day prayers, hear the word of God." Even in the nineteenth century working men resorted to St Olive's, Waterford, for Morning Prayer "with their tools under their arms."[2]

Moreover, Morning and Evening Prayer, while they have been attended by all sections of society daily in cathedrals and parish churches, have been used for family worship in the homes of English people.[3] The author of *The Whole Duty of Man* advises the master of the family to use "the Common Prayer, which for all public addresses to God (and such are family prayers) are so excellent and useful, that we may say of it as David did of Goliath's sword, 'There is none like it.' "[4] Archbishop King likewise advises the laity of the diocese of Derry to use part of the Common Prayer in their homes, "not least, to use such set hymns and collects as seem most adapted to that purpose."[5] This practice became reduced to reading the psalms and lessons of the day. Mary Lamb had to read to her elders "the psalms and chapters, which was my daily task." By the middle of Victoria's reign extempore prayer had become normal in High and Low Church families. Had more "liturgical patterns" been retained, family worship might have continued to this day.[6]

In this machine age the masses are no longer free to attend the daily Offices. Never since the Reformation have people lived more crowded lives. Yet if there is to be a restoration of Christian family life in this country, there must be a restoration of family worship. People should be encouraged to use daily Morning and Evening Prayer either in their parish churches or in their homes. We cannot expect to see family worship thus restored if the Offices are made more elaborate. In a very scattered country parish I find that people who cannot attend the daily Offices will welcome a service conducted in their homes or in the homes of their neighbours. For these house or cottage meetings I have used (*a*) Evening Prayer; (*b*) Compline, which in the 1926 Irish Prayer Book is recommended "for use at Evening Worship in the Home"; and (*c*) an improvised Service. The people are free to choose, and their answer every time is Cranmer's compilation.

Not content with taking away from the people the daily Offices, Mr Staniforth wishes to substitute for Evensong on Sundays an evening devotion, devised by another Hawker of Morwenstowe, "that succeeds in expressing the popular piety of Anglicanism as naturally and

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[1] Wickham Legg: *English Church Life*, pp. 94-110; *Hierugia Anglicana*, Part III, pp. 229-42; Walcott: *Traditions and Customs of Cathedrals*, pp. 160 *sq.*; Bishop Mant: *Religio Quotidiana*; *Tracts for the Times*, No. 84.

[2] *Ecclesiologist*, December, 1867. Bishop Jebb told the House of Lords in 1824 that the daily offices were attended by the poor in the churches of Cork.

[3] Apart from the testimony of Roger de Ascham, Bishop Burnet and Dr Johnson tell how laymen read the Common Prayer to their families.

[4] *The Whole Duty of Man*, p. 230 (Preface to Private Devotions).

[5] *William King: The Inventions of Men in the Worship of God.*

[6] Liturgical patterns have been happily provided for daily worship in schools—*Daily Service for Schools* (ed. G. W. Briggs, etc.).

felicitously as Benediction does for Romanism." Experience shows that Evensong is still popular as the normal Sunday evening service, that it is attended by large congregations in town churches, and that it often proves to be a more popular Nave Service in cathedrals than any improvised substitute. A Roman Catholic scholar attended Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral, and wrote thus to the preacher: "I confess I envied you the *rationabile obsequium* of your Evensong (on which your 'Romanizers' are often so foolishly severe). The absence of offence is surely a great thing, not to speak of the presence of so much that is fine and expansive; and it is old enough now to have the halo of tradition, so utterly lacking to fabricated modern devotions."[1] Roman Catholics are said to envy us and to desire a liturgical form of service more popular in its appeal than Vespers; for the contrast between Evensong in an English and Vespers in a Continental cathedral is one between 'the garment of praise' and 'the spirit of heaviness.' And if Cranmer's compilations have no popular appeal why do Nonconformists[2] and even French Protestants compile forms of service which closely resemble them? "The standard of our worship is, in truth, the standard of our faith."[3] Mr Staniforth admits that "the mind of the Breviary" is not the mind of our Church. Another Hawker of Morwenstowe might too readily depart from the "godly and decent order of the ancient Fathers," and express the unsettled mind of an unsettled age. The 1949 Prayer Book must remain what Jeremy Taylor said of Cranmer's compilations, "both reasonable, and sacred, and free, not only from the indiscretions but (which is very considerable) from the scandal of popularity."[4]

Mr Staniforth refers to a concentration of interest upon "the subjective and non-liturgical portions which follow the Third Collect." Because the Intercessions after the Third Collect have no modern Western counterpart, I can see no reason for calling them non-liturgical or for adopting the curious custom of putting the candles out before they are said. The Eastern Offices are interwoven with litanies of intercession; and the minister who leads the people in prayer, standing in the midst of the nave, is reviving a godly, decent and liturgical custom of the ancient Church.[5] The 1662 revisers extended the liturgical Office to the "Grace." No doubt they intended the Prayers for the King and Royal Family to correspond with the second Versicle and Response, and that for the clergy and people with the third and fourth.[6] Already the Collects for the Day, for Peace and for Grace had corresponded with the first, fifth and sixth Versicle and Response.[7] There is certainly room for a revision of the occasional prayers in view of modern needs. The third Collect for Good Friday, for instance, is the

[1] *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 321.
[2] The Methodist *Shorter Book of Offices* closely reproduces Morning and Evening Prayer.
[3] Bishop Jebb: *Appendix to Sermons*, 1815.
[4] Jeremy Taylor: *Works* (Ed. Heber), vii, p. 287.
[5] Long Collects were said after each psalm and canticle in the Celtic Church. The *Antiphonary of Bangor* contains seventeen Collects on behalf of special persons.
[6] Wheatly: *Rational Illustration of the Prayer Book* (1840 ed.), p. 152.
[7] Proctor and Frere: *op. cit.*, p. 395.

only missionary prayer, there being little missionary enthusiasm before the time of Bishop Berkeley and the founding of S.P.G. There may be much to learn from the Irish and Scottish books. No litany could be more comprehensive than that contained in the appendix of the 1926 Irish Prayer Book, which is based upon the *Deprecatio Sancti Martini pro Populo*, which follows the Epistle in the Stowe Missal.

Mr Staniforth makes some excellent suggestions. Approved Collects for black-letter days are much needed; for those contained in the *English Missal* and kindred Altar Books do not express the mind of our Church, which "alone has adopted the middle course . . . treading in the same hallowed steps with Vincentius, and the Catholic Bishops, and the ancient Fathers: proceeding as far as they proceeded and stopping where they stopped."[1] It is imperative that the 1949 Revisers should know exactly where to stop! Again, third Lections for black-letter days have much to commend them, provided that they are not intruded into the liturgical Office, which is designedly scriptural, and provided that "uncertain stories" are rejected and the *Vitæ Sanctorum* treated scientifically.[2] Our calendar might also be brought up to date, for a reformed Church should be a better judge of sanctity than an unreformed Church.

On the other hand, Mr Staniforth's proposal to impose upon a busy parish priest an Anglican Breviary "with the general public no longer in view" should be stoutly resisted,[3] for it is imperative that he should have time for the "daily weighing of Scripture." And why impose upon him the obligation of saying the second of the "little Hours" when there are available to him many admirable Anglican forms of devotion, and when the town parson will seize the opportunity of providing short lunch-hour services? "For though it is the duty of Christians to pray continually, yet the precise times and seasons of prayer, termed canonical hours, do not rest on any divine command; nor have they ever been pronounced binding on all Churches by any general council: neither has there been any uniformity in the practice of the Christian Church in this respect. Besides this the Churches of the Alexandrian patriarchate . . . only appointed two public assemblies in the day;[4] and no more were customary, even in the monasteries of Egypt, the rest of the day being left for private and voluntary prayer and meditation. Thus also the Church of England left her clergy and people to follow in private the injunction of the Apostle, to 'pray without ceasing'. "[5]

Finally, why should any revision of the Prayer Book be made in 1949 beyond the provision of additional Collects and Intercessions which modern needs may require? If Andrewes, Taylor and Cosin, who were no mean liturgists, venerated Cranmer's compilations, why should the

[1] Bishop Jebb, *op. cit.*

[2] "To lie like a second nocturn" was a proverb in the sixteenth century.

[3] The rubrical permission for priests and deacons to say the Divine Service privately was interpreted by Turner, Patrick, Nichols and Wheatly to mean reciting it with members of their families at home.

[4] "We believe that all the evidence available for the West outside Rome points to the fact that the genuine secular services consisted originally of Vespers and Mattins (including Lauds) only."—W. C. Bishop: *The Mozarabic and Ambrosian Rites*, p. 67.

[5] W. Palmer: *Origines Liturgicæ* (1839 ed.), i, pp. 204-5.

lesser minds of our time tamper with them?[1] We may well say with Laud: "I shall for my part never deny but that the liturgy of the Church of England may be made better; but I am sure withal it may easily be made worse."[2]

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II

There will be many better qualified to criticize J. H. M. Staniforth's paper; but lest it should go unchallenged, the writer, who has no pretensions to being a liturgical scholar, dares to remind Mr Staniforth of a few plain facts.

First, the statement, "the character of the services provided by the B.B.C. and the Army is significant; both these two *ex-officio* interpreters of the common man's religion agree in their mutilation of Prayer Book forms of worship," is not true of the Army. The Army Prayer Book prints Morning and Evening Prayer, the Litany and the Holy Communion in their entirety, with the exception that the alternative canticles are omitted and the number of Psalms is limited by considerations of space (the writer admits that the choice of Psalms is not happy). For Parade Services the Army Prayer Book suggests a Form of Service which mutilates Morning Prayer; but the Parade Service is not the only and certainly not the most popular Service in the Army.

Second, Mr Staniforth states that "among parish priests it is common knowledge that the more closely a service can be made to approximate to the nonconformist style of worship, the more acceptable it is to the laity." Many chaplains would hotly deny this and deplore such a defeatist statement. The writer was once deluded enough to believe it, but five years of service, three and a half of them overseas, have convinced him that he was utterly wrong. Experience teaches that there is a compelling power about Evening Prayer if it is sung exactly as written. In the field and in any place where full prayer books and suitable music are unobtainable, it is often impossible to sing the service. Yet one chaplain, since killed, used to get a good congregation from his battalion every evening of the week in a cleaned cattle-byre in front of Medenine. In garrison churches and wherever there are facilities a well-sung Evening Prayer never lacks a good congregation.

Where the Church has been at fault has been in the neglect of instruction in the proper participation of the congregation in Morning and Evening Prayer, the frequent acceptance of third-rate standards of music, and a carelessness on the part of the priest which has killed his people's share in what is pre-eminently a congregational act of worship.

Mr Staniforth maintains that the existing order is too monotonous—it is "a tramping course of Psalmody and Bible-reading which marches heavily forward from the first day of the year to the last." I do not know whether Mr Staniforth proposes to write new Psalms and a new Bible; but unless he does I see no more reasonable proposal than a monthly recurrence of the Psalms, and an annual and bi-annual

[1] Even though modern liturgical knowledge may be more scientific.
[2] Quoted from More and Cross, *Anglicanism*, p. 178.

recurrence of the Old and New Testaments, with a break on every Holy Day. If Mr Staniforth prefers that certain Psalms and certain Lections should recur more frequently, then the charge of monotony may well lie against him.

The constant part of Morning and Evening Prayer is just sufficient to ensure that, whatever the variables may be, the congregation can feel at home in the service. There is, in the opinion of the writer and of many educated laymen to whom he has talked, a regrettable tendency amongst some priests to provide so many variables that the layman is right out of his depth. In this present age there is so much movement of population, both in war and peace, that our first duty should be to provide in every church in our land services which are basically similar and in which there is always some large part where the stranger can feel at home, whatever additions superior choral ability and the idiosyncrasy of the particular priest and his congregation may make. How often does one hear a layman complain that on going to a strange church he was completely at sea throughout the service. This should not be so, and it is a great scandal that such violation of the spirit of the Book of Common Prayer should be permitted by the episcopate or desired by the clergy; many a layman has been lost to our Church by this impertinent treatment of our services.

As far as the order of service is concerned, there can be only one way in which our congregations may be kept and increased, and that is by building on the heritage we have. A little more teaching about its meaning and beauty, a little more care from reader and organist, and a little less archaistic wishful thinking, and the beauty of Morning and Evening Prayer may arise phœnix-like from the ashes to which it has all too often been reduced by the consuming fire of egotistical priests determined to have their own way irrespective of the discipline of their Church and the views of their laity.

K. W. Meiklejohn, C.F.

M.E.F.

BOOK REVIEWS

Dispensation in Practice and Theory—with Special Reference to the Anglican Churches. The Report of a Commission appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1935. S.P.C.K. 7s. 6d.

I find myself in an odd fix. When this book was sent to me, a friend drew my attention to a review of it in the *Church Times* of October 20, 1944; but, wishing to make an unprejudiced judgment, I read the book first, noting points for comment as I went along. Only then did I turn to the *Church Times*—and discover, to my confusion, that "A Canonist" had stolen the words from my pen. Not only had he remarked on the points I had noted, but he had discussed them more fully than my allotted space allowed. I think, therefore, that the best service I can do those who are interested in this matter of dispensation is to recommend to them his careful appreciation of the Commission's work. What follows here may be regarded as supplementary.

The Commission with whose findings we are concerned reported to the Archbishop in March, 1942. The published volume, dated 1944, contains an historical introduction, dealing with Eastern, Western and Anglican law and practice; a majority report, signed by the chairman (Dr E. J. Palmer) and five other commissioners; and two minority reports, by the Bishop of Oxford and Dr Sparrow Simpson. The majority report treats of the nature and purpose of dispensation, and the criteria by which its lawfulness or propriety may be judged; the location of the dispensing power in the Church; the kinds of law and custom that are dispensable; the relation of dispensation to excommunication; certain objections to dispensation; and the policy to be adopted in dispensing. It ends with recommendations. The Bishop of Oxford approves the general trend of the report; but, regarding the train of thought in a number of important passages as "obscure, ambiguous, and even self-contradictory," he reserves the right "to dissociate himself from, and even to criticize, the expressions and arguments employed in particular passages" (p. 167). Dr Sparrow Simpson, on the other hand, dissents from the majority report on the grounds (*a*) that in discussing dispensation from laws touching the doctrines of the ministry and sacraments it "takes refuge in the purely speculative method" (p. 169), indicating the consequences of different doctrines, but passing no judgment on the doctrines themselves; and (*b*) that "it omits most important historic evidence of protests, cautions and warnings from theologians and canonists concerning the dangers by which extensive increase of dispensations has been attended" (p. 178).

The first thing to be said about this book is that it has qualities not always found in reports by commissions of this kind. Without being unduly technical, it reveals a firm grasp on the principles and terminology of canon law and moral theology; it makes distinctions with clarity and precision; and it uses history to illuminate, not to befog, the questions at issue. Consequently it marks a step forward in the reclamation of fields long neglected by Anglican theology; and it should do something to cheer those who are depressed by the perennial ineptitude of the "Christian Morals" paper in G.O.E. and the curious refusal of the powers that be to recognize that moral theology and canon law have a claim upon the attention of ordinands.

Of course, the book has its faults. One cannot make up the neglect of centuries in a moment. But it seems a pity that the Bishop of Oxford, in dissociating himself from the majority, did not give his reasons at length; for—such is his authority in these matters—his words are bound to make folk suspicious of the report and set them wondering where the catch is. May we hope that he will not delay to formulate his criticisms for the assistance of readers?

Here two criticisms must suffice. The first has already been made by the anonymous canonist. The report regards the diocesan bishop as the normal dispenser, but suggests that "the control of the general principles of dispensation" should be assumed by "the Episcopal Synods where they exist, and, where they do not exist, by the House of Bishops" (p. 82). But in England, at any rate, the right of con-

currence or veto possessed by the Lower Houses of Convocation is a most valuable and important part of the Church's constitution. Why then should the presbyterate, of which, it seems, discipline was in the pre-Nicene Church the special concern, be deprived of its privilege in the matter of dispensation? The second criticism has to do with the Commission's treatment of dispensation in relation to natural and revealed law (pp. 101 *ff.*). Natural law is defined in the report as "that law of right conduct, whether written in Scripture or no, which is arrived at by reason and which once stated receives the immediate approval of the common conscience of mankind" (p. 104). But in fact natural law is not "arrived at by reason" simply, nor is it, when declared, always approved by "the common conscience of mankind," because reason and conscience are clouded by "the baneful ruin which followed the fall of Adam." Natural law is rather the law that a community of perfectly "natural" men *would, if it existed,* apprehend by reason. As no such community does exist, the content of this law has in great part to be "reconstructed" by the supernatural Church (the community in which reason is restored through faith) by abstraction from her total knowledge of the will of God for man. The report's definition of the divine (revealed) law, that it is "that law which God has revealed in Scripture," is more satisfactory, provided it is clearly recognized that not everything that is commanded in Scripture belongs to that law; but the suggestion that "our Lord's criticism of the Old Law" (p. 104) and, more particularly, His treatment of the law of the sabbath (p. 105) open possibilities of occasional dispensation from the divine law seems to me highly dangerous. Our Lord did not *dispense from* the Old Law; He *interpreted, fulfilled and perfected* it. The moral is, not that the Church may dispense from the divine law, but that, in formulating it, she must always read and interpret the Bible *as a whole.* The precepts of the divine law are not subject to dispensation; but there must be continual *determination,* distinguishing particular from universal precepts, and precepts from counsels, and deciding whether all the precepts commonly attributed to the divine law do in fact belong to it. And so with the natural law: in itself it is indispensable, but its content needs accurate determination.

One cannot help wondering what will happen to this report. In the Church of England, at any rate, it is no use establishing a system of dispensation until *the law* has been clarified and reformed. We know, of course, that another Commission is now considering the canon law. But it is difficult to see how its work can bear practical fruit until the Church has trained some canonists; for the revision of canon law is not a job for amateurs. And the training of canonists will involve much research into the origin and bases of the *ius canonicum,* with particular reference to the relation between written and unwritten law. As the reviewer in the *Church Times* pointed out, the whole matter of custom needs far more attention than the report was able to give it. It will not do to accept the principles of the *Codex Iuris Canonici* uncritically, the tendency of Roman canonists being always to treat custom as the poor relation of the *lex scripta.* But there is a greater obstacle to the establishment of a workable system of dispensation in the Church of

England than the present condition of canon law—viz., the *statutory* nature of so much of the law by which the Church is now governed. Statute law cannot legally be dispensed with, unless the right of dispensation is assigned by statute also, as it was by the Dispensations Act of 1534. But few would be content to see the bishops exercising a dispensing power derived from Parliament. This is a very real difficulty, which is increased every time a Church Assembly measure becomes law.

G. B. Bentley.

Lincoln.

The Old Testament in the Christian Church. By H. F. D. Sparks. S.C.M. Press. 6s.

This little book is described by its author as "a humble effort to explain to the plain man who is also a Christian . . . exactly why and how modern knowledge has affected the traditional Christian attitude to the Old Testament; and precisely what in the light of this situation is the value of the Old Testament for him and his fellow-Christians today" (p. 7). In Chapter I the traditional Christian attitude towards the Old Testament is described. Chapters II, III, IV deal with the bearing on the traditional view of the Old Testament of the literary, archæological, historical, astronomical, geological and anthropological studies of the last century and a half. Chapter V contains a summary of the results of the previous chapters and suggestions as to the ways in which a twentieth-century Christian may rightly think of the Old Testament and rightly use it in private devotion and in public worship. Three Appended Notes—(A) on the relation between higher criticism and archæology; (B) on the liturgical use of the Apocrypha and of extra-biblical literature; (C) on the exposition of the lessons read in church—bring the book to an end. There is, alas, no index.

The Christian of today, if he follows the advice here given, will ignore neither the claims of the Christian tradition (as some modernists do), nor the claims of modern knowledge (as many traditionalists do). He will value the Old Testament not less than the traditionalist, but for different reasons. He will no longer believe that the Old Testament contains an infallible record of the origin of the universe and man, history that is free from all errors of fact, cult-regulations that have no parallels elsewhere, precepts that are never at variance with Christian morality, predictions of the details of the life of Jesus. He will no longer be able to accept as final and convincing all the arguments based on Old Testament passages by New Testament writers. Nevertheless, he will gladly acknowledge that Hebrew religion, even though it "started where others started," rose to far greater heights than any other ancient religion; that "the Hebrews . . . made a number of remarkable and distinctive contributions to the sum-total of man's beliefs" (p. 77); that in the Old Testament "we may even now find God speaking to us" (p. 93); that "the Old Testament has provided for centuries an unquestioned foundation upon which the whole structure of Christian theology has been reared," and that "so far from being antagonistic to Christianity, or in any way an 'option' which Christians may accept

or refuse at will, the Old Testament is an essential part of Christianity and a vital element in its right understanding" (p. 94*f.*). Consequently he will insist on the retention in public services of lessons taken from the Old Testament; and, in public and in private, he will read not only those parts of it that are immediately edifying, but also those parts of it which speak approvingly of beliefs and practices later seen to be unworthy of God's people. He will wish to have made clear not only the things which his religion commends, but also the things which it has finally rejected.

As a whole Mr Sparks' book is lucid, learned and convincing. It contains, however, a few doubtful statements. It is almost certain that Isaiah ix, 6 does not refer to a son of Hezekiah (p. 43), and by no means certain that it was written by Isaiah. It has been asserted, but never proved, that the Hebrews once worshipped their ancestors (p. 71) and that those ancestors were Babylonian (p. 73); and that the services in Jerusalem closely resembled the services in Egyptian and Babylonian temples.

F. S. Marsh.

Cambridge.

From Jesus to Paul. By Joseph Klausner. Translated from the Hebrew by W. F. Stinespring. Allen and Unwin. 15s.

It is interesting to find a Jewish historian showing the interest which Klausner manifests in the origins of Christianity; but it is to be regretted that his attempt to write the history of Christian origins is marked by a lack of historical accuracy which makes the result worthless. It is, of course, a matter of opinion whether St Paul was right or wrong in his view of Judaism as a religious system, and it is natural that Klausner should hold he was wrong. It is equally natural that he should find the apostle of the Gentiles largely unsympathetic, though here he shows a surprising insight into the two sides of St Paul's character, with his refusal to compromise on certain issues and his willingness to yield on others; naturally Klausner sees in this a weakness, since the points on which he is ready to yield are those which Klausner regards as essential while St Paul and the Church regard them as matters of detail. Thus for Klausner St Paul is not a saint. But it is startling to find that this view "has also been pointed out with special emphasis by the Christian Eduard Meyer" (p. 431); it is hard that the great German historian should be described as a Christian on the strength of his great work on Christian origins intended to prove the worthlessness of the Christian religion. Similarly it is remarkable in the present year of grace to find Renan quoted as an authority on the appearance of the risen Christ to Mary Magdalene.

But these are minor points. The trouble is that the whole book bristles with historical inaccuracies and unsupported opinions stated as historical facts. The most remarkable is on p. 20, where we read that the Emperor Tiberius "praised Gaius Cæsar (Caligula), his grandson, because he did not visit Judea." But the reference to Suetonius given in the footnote tells us that Augustus praised his grandson Gaius, who predeceased him! After this it is a small matter that Josephus should

be treated as a reliable historian; his fairy-story of the brigands Asinai and Hanilai is treated as a piece of history, and there is no sign that Klausner has even envisaged the need of going behind Josephus to his sources before accepting anything he says as reliable. Similarly he shows no understanding of the mixed popular brand of philosophy, made up of a conflation of Stoicism and Platonism, which was general in educated Hellenistic circles. As a result he is able to treat Philo as a serious philosopher and original thinker, whereas he is merely a compiler of popular Jewish Hellenistic teaching, which he endeavours to force into the framework of an allegorical commentary on the Pentateuch. Again the book of Wisdom is rightly enough treated (p. 125) as compounded of the Wisdom of Ecclesiasticus and Proverbs on the one hand and Stoicism on the other; but it appears to be supposed that the Wisdom of Proverbs viii and Ecclesiasticus xxiv is a Jewish figure, not a mildly-watered-down Isis-Astarte.

Again Klausner follows an obsolete tradition of Christian scholarship in supposing that the similarities between Acts and Josephus prove that Luke had read Josephus, ignoring the possibility pointed out by Streeter that Luke had heard Josephus reciting his history in lecture form at Rome, and the still greater probability that both incorporate a common source. And again it is a little startling to read (p. 405), "Felix, whose wife was a Jewess, understood the matter before him [the accusation of St Paul] better than the chiliarch," with a footnote, "Thus I understand the phrase 'having more exact knowledge concerning the Way'. If he had known 'concerning the Way' with absolute clarity, it would not have been necessary to turn for information to Drusilla, his Jewish wife." But there is not a scrap of evidence that he did turn to her, and Drusilla, an Herodian princess, divorced from Azizus of Emesa to marry Felix before she was seventeen, is hardly likely to have been a great authority on the relations of Judaism and Christianity; she probably knew little of the former and nothing of the latter.

The book has some merits. Klausner recognizes the futility of much that has been written on "the Christ-myth" and very sanely recognizes the impossibility of the position of the extremer exponents of "form-criticism" in denying that we have any adequate knowledge of the historical Jesus. It is a little hard that, while St Paul is belittled for his willingness to make compromises with practical necessities, Christianity should be regarded as inferior to Judaism precisely because Judaism will not allow itself "to reach even in theory the ethical extremeness of Christianity"; but it is remarkable that Klausner, in envisaging a national Messianic Judaism established in Palestine, writes: "Then, of course, much shall be changed in the ceremonial laws of Judaism." But St Paul said this about 1800 years ago; and it was for saying this, and not as Klausner quite wrongly supposes for seeing in Jesus the Incarnation of the Wisdom-Logos of contemporary Hellenistic and Jewish thought, that He was rejected by His own people.

Wilfred L. Knox.

Cambridge.

ST AUGUSTINE'S EPISCOPATE: A brief introduction to his writings as a Christian. By W. J. Sparrow Simpson. S.P.C.K. 7s. 6d.

It must be well over sixty years since the father to whose memory this book is dedicated "gave his undergraduate son a complete set of the works of St Augustine, with a request that he would study them." The injunction has been most faithfully observed. In 1910 (when the present reviewer was himself an undergraduate and the author was no longer a young man) appeared the firstfruits of those studies, *St Augustine and African Church Divisions*; and subject and treatment indicated the characteristic trend of the student's interest. Nine years later came *The Letters of St Augustine* in the series of Handbooks of Christian Literature, a book which has lost none of its usefulness as showing how vivid and complete a picture of the man, the bishop and the theologian emerges from his correspondence. There followed in 1925 a translation of the *De Spiritu et Littera*; and in 1930 the substantial and thorough work on *St Augustine's Conversion*. Written when its subject had been intensively discussed for some years by European scholars, it gave a conservative but critical estimate of the historical reliability of the *Confessions*, dwelling especially on the importance of the influence of St Ambrose's preaching and writing at Milan; but its chief value lay in the full accounts which it included of Augustine's earlier and less familiar works. Its defects appear when it is compared with the epoch-making lecture of Karl Adam, delivered in the same year—"Die Geistige Entwicklung des Hlg. Augustinus"—which established once and for all the true relation between Augustine's conversion and his Neo-Platonism, and traced with a masterly hand the development of the disciple of Plotinus into the father of Catholicism.

No one can read the present volume, marked by its title as a sequel to *St Augustine's Conversion*, but really a little Introduction to St Augustine, without a warm sense of admiration for this veteran Augustinian, who has returned in the evening of his long life as a writer in many fields to his oldest and most constant enthusiasm—as we could wish that the Bishop of Hippo might have gone back to Plotinus instead of wearing himself out over the defeated and discredited Julian. Dr Sparrow Simpson has never been inclined to magnify his hero by glozing over his faults and his errors, and he has found the perfect comment, at once dry and mellow, on Augustine's favourite appeal to Romans xi, 33 to crush the objector to his predestinarian doctrine: "If the divine judgments are unsearchable, we need not dogmatize too confidently on what they are."

It would indeed be difficult to produce an entirely satisfactory Introduction to the great Father in so short a space, and the absence of any recognition of our debt not only to Karl Adam but to Etienne Gilson and Father Emile Mersch is disappointing. One would like to know the ground for the author's curious statement, repeated from his earlier work, that Augustine's acquaintance with "the books of the Platonists" dates from his first stay in Rome, whereas the *Confessions* and the *Dialogues* clearly place it after his introduction to Ambrose at Milan. The point is not unimportant; but a more serious matter is the failure to appreciate the centrality of *caritas* in every sphere of

Augustinian teaching: that the word should not occur either in the chapters on Donatism and the conception of the Church or in that on the Necessity of Grace is quite inexplicable.

But it would be ungracious and ungrateful to end on a note of criticism. Dr Sparrow Simpson has set an example which English theologians need. No one has the right to talk about Augustinianism until he has read Augustine.

J. BURNABY.

CAMBRIDGE.

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE CHURCH. Contemporary Essays. Lutterworth Press. 8s. 6d.

The title of this book scarcely serves to indicate its nature and scope, being strictly applicable to one only of the essays here collected together—that of Dr Brunner. The book generally is a collection of articles emanating from four continents and giving expression to attempts of nine writers, who are deeply concerned for the future of the Church, to relate Christianity to contemporary problems, including such questions of immediate urgency as "The Punishment of War Criminals," "Can Germany share in Re-education?", "Can Christianity and Communism meet?" A first reading will probably produce the feeling of a certain lack of unity, and in some cases of a too slight treatment of the themes discussed. Further examination will, however, go far towards dissipating this feeling, for much useful material for reflection is provided in these pages. In so far as the title may be said to cover all the contributions, it does so in the sense that the criticism of the Church throughout is that it is much too inarticulate as a fellowship to bring its weight decisively to bear on the very concrete organizations of secular and material purpose which tend to dominate the modern world. Thus Drs A. H. Murray and M. Versfeld of Cape Town University, who collaborate in the article entitled "The Church's Rôle in Politics," would have the Church recognize herself as a "Pressure Group" within the State, whose political and social function it is to prevent the liberal and humanistic heritage of the Middle Ages from degenerating into naturalism and materialism through the influence of a mechanistic psychology of social adjustment, and the dominance of an economic State theory. Following upon this, there comes appropriately an article by Benedicta Rowe, of the Women's College, Madras, on "The Disunited Church: Why? And How Long?" This article is, in our opinion, the gem of the book. It says little or nothing that is new, but it provides a brief but exceedingly helpful conspectus of the Church's life through the centuries as seen from the background of the Incarnation; and exhibits the main divisions of Christendom as motivated not simply by human passion and historic contingency but also by certain fundamental spiritual urges. The writer points out acutely that even National and Regional Churches are continually transcending their local boundaries and striving after Catholic and universalist objectives.

Dr Brunner addresses himself directly to an examination of the Predicament of the Church today, and makes certain concrete pro-

posals to meet the situation. His contribution is characteristically competent and forthright, but he breaks little fresh ground and much of what he advocates is already in process of realization, in this country at any rate. Strangely, he makes no mention of the problem of the Christian education of children, and scarcely glances at the difficulty of preventing the drift from the Church of the young adolescent. One feels, moreover, that his apologetic interests tend to run away with him. Mr F. B. Welbourn of the Student Christian Movement discusses the problem of the Punishment of War Criminals from the standpoint of Gospel and Law. Theologically, this article seems to us to suffer from the fact that it is not broad-based on any clearly conceived doctrine of the Atonement; and this lack makes its conclusions curiously indefinite and halting. Incidentally the book generally is vulnerable in this respect. Many will turn with expectancy to the article by Tiran Nersoyan of the Armenian Church, London, on "Can Christianity and Communism meet?" The writer contends that the "dialectic" of the Marxian doctrine of Dialectic Materialism leads to a spiritual interpretation of reality. It may be so, but if that is the case, is not the doctrine in its Marxian form thereby discredited? Besides, what has this spiritual interpretation of reality to do with New Testament Christianity? One feels more than a little suspicious of this kind of apologetic. The articles "Can Germany share in Re-education?" by Patricia Owen, Christian International Service, and "Can the Older Churches learn from the Younger?" by C. G. Schweitzer, of Wistow Training Centre, are interesting and informative, though the latter is rather unduly brief. The essay of the Master of Balliol on "Duty to God and the State," which heads the list, makes good reading but concerns itself only with general principles. Altogether this book would form an excellent basis for group study and discussion, and may be warmly commended from that point of view. F. W. CAMFIELD.

KINGSBRIDGE.

ONE KIND OF RELIGION. By Helen Wodehouse. Cambridge University Press. 8s. 6d.

THE WORD AS TRUTH. A critical examination of the Christian Doctrine of Revelation in the writings of Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth. By Alan Fairweather. Lutterworth Library. Vol. 18. 10s. 6d.

The appearance of both these volumes is significant. We have recently been hearing much about biblical theology and "existenz" theology—these discussions have clarified our views about fundamental ideas found in the scriptures and other credal statements. There has been a welcome protest against "making fudge" of the terms of our religion; it was nevertheless becoming increasingly evident that these discussions were forcing into the foreground questions of cosmology. It is today necessary to ask once more what type of cosmology is compatible, and what types are incompatible, with the Christian Faith; this question is of course different from the historical inquiry as to what cosmologies have in fact been accepted by Christians in past

ages. To say anything worth while on this issue needs accurate theological information and sober metaphysical thinking. Both authors stress these points clearly and humbly.

Miss Wodehouse expresses her cosmology and religion partly in the language of the great Idealist tradition, but avoids its extravagances. Her terms have also a similarity to those of the classical Christian theology, in which she is well versed. It can be said that she offers a *translation* of the orthodox terms and asks whether her translation is not an adequate basis for a faith free from an outmoded cosmology. Theologians will ask whether her doctrine fits in with the shape and movement of the Liturgy, for it is there that the nerve of Christian teaching is exposed; others would ask how she treats of the question of the relation of Time to Eternity, contending that to reach clearer statements of this problem is one of the pressing needs of philosophical theology; whereas a further body of inquirers would want to know whether her view of God, and of God's relation to men, is such as to support the practical Christian life. All these questions would be fair, relevant and decisive. Miss Wodehouse does not attempt to evade the theist's problem, but she does offer a radical solution. This solution, it seems to me, is largely achieved by the use of metaphorical language —language strictly applicable only to acts; this helps her to attribute a creativity and a "dunamis" to a philosophical notion (the Concrete Universal); this notion is then made the nexus of a cosmology. The Christian doctrine has been very guarded against thinking of the eternal order merely in terms of "patterns" or "universals"; it thinks in terms of an eternal God who is utterly individual, and a pure act of existence; historical becoming is then described as an existence "borrowed" from God. It is here that the tension between the present work and the traditional emphasis is most acute. It might be that in the sphere of ethics the universe, as described, could be the ground for the kind of good the author values; but even then it would be far from clear that its *end* is to produce that good. (Two technical points can be noted. The doctrine of the Concrete Universal contains an invalid criticism of the universal as an abstractum, this latter notion being confused with the class concept. It also needs the doctrine it criticizes because the author is interested in *types* of concrete universals.)

Mr Fairweather clears away many confusions in small compass. His treatment of Barth is a good and restrained piece of writing; what he says of St Thomas Aquinas is clear though less full. It is argued that God offers a direct, though mediate, knowledge of Himself. This point is well made and is of such importance that it would have been valuable to have a fuller treatment of the various senses in which knowledge can be mediate. Direct knowledge of God need not at first be deep and clear; but it is shown that it can be genuine although its import is only partially grasped. This serves as a corrective to those tendencies which confuse the notion of revealed knowledge and the notion of clear and distinct ideas. This confusion, along with the confusion that the criterion of revealed knowledge is a sense of certitude, has done much harm to theology, and both confusions often go together. It is shown that knowledge is of reality and not of propositions. This is sound

except for certain usages of the verb "to know"; but there remains the question whether knowledge is not always apprehended in propositional form. The author would probably say that it is; if so, then those who stress that revelation comes in and through history would have to admit that what is apprehended through history is apprehended in propositional form. There is here a double mediation and two senses of the word "mediate"; the use of this word in religion and in a theory of knowledge has a different colour, and the difference needs describing and analysing. The author has started this task and has started it well.

H. I. DAVIES.

LAMPETER.

THE HEART OF MAN. By Gerald Vann, O.P. Centenary Press. 6s.

In this urbanely written study of the nature of man Fr Vann has made a useful contribution to the growing mass of Christian literature on the subject. He bases his exposition on the fact that two powerful forces can be seen at work in the heart of man. Man is both lover and maker, man of vision and man of power. There is always tension between the two, but when life is lived in its fullness they are united in a fruitful harmony. As lover, man needs "the vision of the Whole," and he cannot get that from science, which does not deal with ultimates. He needs God, and the vision of good and evil; and, because sin is an undeniable fact, he needs restoration and renewal. He needs to be freed from "the grasping, utilizing attitude to created things" with its degrading effects upon human relationships. He needs to learn worship, and " Christian morality is worship." As maker, man needs art, "the skill and vision to make lovely things"; and though art is autonomous, the artist is not, and he will serve humanity best if what he makes is holy. He needs the "primary form of making," which is love-making, and that means marriage and the family and the bringing-up of children. He has to make a justly ordered society, which implies both rights and responsibilities. Finally he needs the Church, not only to make him a whole human being, but also to be made by him; that is, to receive from him service and the enrichment of her life.

The theme is not new, but is none the worse for that. It is the treatment of the theme that compels attention and makes the book worth reading. The writer ranges over a wide variety of subjects in these thoughtful chapters, and he seldom fails to say something illuminating; and his quiet, conciliatory manner of presenting his argument has an attractive dignity of its own.

The book has a valuable appendix, in which Fr Vann discusses, at some length and with sympathetic understanding, some fundamental problems raised in a letter from a non-Christian friend, a student of anthropology and religion, who asks certain pertinent questions concerning the doctrine of the Fall.

H. BALMFORTH.

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Printed in Great Britain by
Billing and Sons Ltd., Guildford and Esher